A PEACE OF BRICKS AND MORTAR: THINKING CEASEFIRE LANDSCAPES WITH GRAMSCI

Ceasefires, open fires

In autumn 2010, an event entitled 'History on the Grill' took place in Nicosia's Buffer Zone. It featured the mobile barbecue, *foukoú/mangal*, quintessential element of Cypriot culture and its crassness. Families, entertainers, academics, professionals, and activists, all in support of reconciliation activities in Cyprus, wandered, played, and socialised on the empty street in front of Ledra Palace Hotel in Cyprus' divided capital. Construction helmets were being passed around for photo posing and for the video clip that would be produced to publicise the event. The crowd, enjoying a mostly vegetarian barbecue that took the sting out of the meat-heavy version of a traditional barbecue, were celebrating the 'ground-breaking' for the Home for Cooperation. Over the next few weeks, construction workers and machinery would enter the still closed building in front of which the barbecue had been lit, and renovate it into a new conference and office facility. The crowd was hopeful that something new would begin here, a social space for academic-activist-public engagement to initiate a change of script on history, nationalism, and the conflict; and that this might contribute to eventually taking down the barriers erected by the ethnic conflict and to societal reconciliation.

Fast forward a little over two years, New Year's Eve 2011. Another event took place a kilometre or so away, in another part of Nicosia's Buffer Zone, this time the crossing point known as Ledra street (both names have a common reference to the ancient settlement of Ledra, the oldest discovered in the Nicosia area). The party was in the section connecting the Greek and Turkish parts of the main pedestrian shopping street in the old part of town. It was organised by the Occupy Buffer Zone movement, camped in the area since the beginning of the global Occupy demonstrations. The barbecue was made from a reused metal barrel, of the kind the movement had made into stoves for nightly warmth during their occupation (Figure 1). The main ingredients, meat and halloumi cheese, had been cause for some concern in the run-up to the event due to the cost, but had been secured. There was also alcohol and a portable music station, constructed in a makeshift fashion in previous years and used for street parade events. Electricity came from a borrowed generator. Some of the participants in the History on the Grill event were here too, but this party was dominated by a slightly younger crowd, sporting dreadlocks, tattered outfits, tattoos and piercings. The party did not celebrate a future expectation but the presence of Occupy there at that moment. But even though the main actors were not planning the future, this was the event that would mark the next phase of the movement's development, as some of the occupiers would enter the derelict building they had been barbecuing outside of and rehabilitate it into living quarters over the next few weeks (also Erdal Ilican 2017; 2013).

Two open fires in the ceasefire zone, two festivals, two processes of reconstruction. The feasts signified the launch of activities that transformed two buildings in the Buffer Zone

from derelict shells to inhabited spaces. In the case of the Home for Cooperation this was an effort carefully planned by activists and executed by professionals. In the case of OBZ, it was an informal, *ad hoc* process, carried out by the very same activists who imagined it, shared the suggestion, agreed, and operationalised it on the spot in the early hours of 2012. The people participating in the two events may not have been so different, politically or socially. Many have middle class backgrounds, others are outcasts; the vast majority share peace-oriented perspectives on the future of Cyprus, others are exasperated by the continuation of inconclusive negotiations; some identify as liberals, others as anarchists, some as leftists. These differences impacted on the processes of reconstruction that were undertaken but were not the only determining factors. The investment in labour and capital in each case took very different forms. And in retrospect, it ultimately produced very different people, endowing one group with expertise in reconciliation and cooperation amongst Cypriot communities, and rendering the other proponents of radical political action.

This paper is an attempt to compare how these reconstruction processes, and the ways in which they engage with ruins from the war, approaching them as heritage to be memorialised but also overcome, take shape as day to day practices. Who undertakes the reconstruction of war-ravished buildings, whether formally considered heritage or not,[1] matters; it matters to how the reconstruction is carried out, but also to its success. The who, and the power structures in which that question is immersed, define whether movements survive or not; along with their ideas about how buildings should be reused, by whom, and for what purposes, as well as in what relation to established authorities. David Harvey has claimed that '[c]ontrolled spectacles and festivals are one thing, but riots and revolutions can also become "festivals of the people"' (1990: 266). This paper is about the uncertain transformations from one to the other. And while some have criticised would-be revolutionary initiatives of leaning on the 'festival' side a bit too much, enjoying as it were, more than intervening in regime structures, our focus is not on distinguishing festival from political action so much as it is to study their merging. What we are interested in are the moments at which the debris of war-ruined buildings becomes part of the imagination and the bodies of those who transform it as they enter the ruins, ponder their history, and re-inhabit them. In the Cypriot Buffer Zone, such transformation may look like renovation (as in the case of the Home for Cooperation), or it may look like squatting (as in the case of OBZ). But different as these transformations are, they share, unlike other kinds of renovation or squatting, an inevitable engagement with the violence that ruined these buildings. The cusp on which the transformation between festival and revolution sits is riddled with bullets – and these bullet holes have to be considered, evaluated, and decided upon. How can we rethink heritage reconstruction and conflict in ways that embed the socio-politics of labour and materiality in the links between them?

[1] For a discussion of formal and informal classifications of heritage in the Cyprus conflict and a theorisation of the processes of heretigisation see Demetriou (2012; 2015). In a sense, this article picks up from that discussion. It also develops questions regarding the connections between tangible and intangible heritage in Nicosia, as for example explored in the Euro-Med project "Mediterranean Voices" (Scott, 2012).

In asking how that transformation from festival to revolution is effected and to what cost, we ask about the limits within which hegemonic power structures can afford critique. A group of professionals might indeed have reason to hope that bricks and mortar can effect revisions of the nationalist narrative. But dreadlocked students espousing social justice and anti-authoritarianism, know that they cannot hope to be granted access, let alone be tolerated to clean out and rehabilitate an empty building and turn it into a social space to share and promote their ideas. The 'successes' of such movements remains debatable (Thorn, 2012) and can easily be dismissed as irrelevant to formal politics, even self-indulgent. But this in itself is a political stance, evaluating 'effects' on predetermined bases of what might constitute relevance and irrelevance to politics proper. Art, for example, which often 'indulges' in the use of ruins and dereliction, as indeed it does in sites in the Buffer Zone, is widely recognized as an important building block in the process of gentrification and the politics of rehabilitation that it involves. Is such indulgence more politically relevant than occupy protests? Would the political work of NGOs in the city, distributing say aid or food, or holding performance events in re-appropriated buildings be more politically relevant? And would any of these activities be non-indulgent by definition? These are questions that ultimately imply a moral evaluation of politics (as serious, joyless, efficient), which at the very least jars with what we know about the work of performativity and cynicism in politics. Thus, instead of taking these terms as our basis for evaluation of political action, we want to highlight is the transformative potential that festivals-cum-revolutions leave behind in the spaces that have been organically engaged with, especially after these spaces have been reconstructed by on the level of bricks and mortar. In considering the implications of such reconstructions, the paper then examines the role of actors in managing conflict heritage and using it to overcome division.

These actors, we suggest, are actually two groups of 'organic intellectuals' in the Gramscian sense – people 'who transform the incoherent and fragmentary "feelings" of those who live a particular class position into a coherent and reasoned account of the world as it appears from that position' (Crehan, 2002: 129-130). And therefore our examination is of the role of organic intellectuals in the making of heritage and the parallel examination of the hegemony of heritage in urban policy. As a space that social justice politics is being asked to transform (Mitchell, 2003; Swyngedouw and Haynen, 2003; Smith, 2002; Harvey, 2010), buildings ravaged by war and left dilapidated are a particular kind of war heritage embroiled in battles of reconstruction. The battles that we recount here are about creating landscapes that memorialise not only ethnic conflict but the multiple political conflicts that unfold in time and space.

In Nicosia, a city grown out of a medieval core which was enclosed in Ottoman times (1571-1878) within the pre-existing Venetian walls, today's conflicts are about the gentrification of the city centre, the political ideology battles exacerbated by the financial crisis, battles for representation, claims to space, and multiple critiques of authority and nationalist narratives. These conflicts are overlain over older conflicts for political power unfolding from the period of British colonial rule (1878-1960) as clashes, killings, and geographic separation between Greek- and Turkish- Cypriots, which culminated in the

establishment of the UN-administered Green Line in the centre of town in 1963 and extended after the 1974 war. These older conflicts resulted in the repossession of properties belonging to ethnic Others left on the 'other side',[2] the disinvestment from areas close to the Green Line, the decline of neighbourhoods in these areas, and the dilapidation of buildings within and around this UN Buffer Zone, which is now the focus of gentrification investment. These conflicts have produced monopolies on property development and have reconfigured downtown areas into migrant pockets, sex work neighbourhoods and upmarket business and tourist habitats, all within meters of each other. And likewise today, what is reconstructed, how, and by whom, and how it is lived in and used after the reconstruction are all questions that imply the re-shaping of communities, and the ethical coding of property, value, and profit.

In this article we want to stress the importance of looking into these questions and their relation to heritage processes from a Gramscian perspective. Much of the critical literature on urban planning takes account of Gramsci's category of 'organic intellectuals' (1971: 5-23). Where these intellectuals are located in urban space, however, seems an open question. Speaking on post-apartheid South African urban space, Pieterse (2006) argues that such intellectuals, who provide the link between planning policy and grassroots struggles can provide indigenous solutions. Liu (2006) suggests a focus on community organising as a location for 'organic intellectuals' in the city, moving the Gramscian focus further away from state centres of power to the margins. Kipfer (2008: 134-146) argues that the anti-capitalist critique articulated at the current moment partakes of both Gramscian social anti-capitalism and Lefebvrian artistic anti-capitalism where urban protest may yet engender a radical counter-hegemonic critique from the margins of the everyday. DelSesto (2015) suggest that urban gardening movements, arising from 1970s 'garden guerrillas' e.g. in New York are examples of organic intellectuals re-writing the hegemonic script about appropriation of urban space. These readings suggest that in looking for organic intellectuals in urban space, we are looking at broad fields of actions and broad concepts of social groups. We have to then look much further than the urban development professionals that many studies of urban development in Nicosia have been centering on. And importantly, we are also looking at multiple forms of 'organicism', which involves not only linkages between social groups and the state, but also between people and space, communities and the materialities around them, enclosures and the work of their dissolution.

This organicism is central to our concerns and was also central to Gramsci's who writes that '*homo faber* cannot be separated from *homo sapiens*' (1971: 9). In Crehan's anthropological development of this concept, materiality is strongly present: she pays particular attention to the metaphor of building and destroying ditches and fortresses to describe the organic intellectual work that needs to be done against the state and its hegemonic discourse (2002: 152-160). The intellectualism of organic intellectuals, she also explains, is centred on their educational role over and above the sophistication of

[2] This is one aspect of the legacy of cosmopolitan coexistence that characterised many Mediterranean cities, elaborated in Scott (2012). The ramifications of repossession of Other properties on concepts of sovereignty are explored in Erdal Ilican (2011).

their ideas (ibid). We take that cue to explore two processes of reconstruction that could be classified as 'organic' in the sense of arising out of and within communities and geared towards the needs of those communities. In line with Gramscian readings, we also see in such 'organicism' a transformative capacity towards a new political situation. And we concentrate specifically of how such organicism ties integrally together thought and action, material and conceptual transformation. In this sense, we explore organic reconstruction as counter-hegemonic practice that formulates wars of position, changing only partly hegemonic structures by introducing new discourses and succeeding, in this change, to variable degrees.

The Home for Cooperation

The 'Home for Cooperation' (often shortened to 'H4C'), is the name of a building inaugurated in 2011 (insert photo). The initiators of the reconstruction were the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research (AHDR), a non-governmental organisation made up of Greek- and Turkish- Cypriots, which was founded in 2003 – the year that the border opened. The founding team consisted in large part of educators (school teachers, education graduates, Turkish-Cypriot union leaders, academics) who had identified history as one of the biggest factors in the perpetuation of conflict cultures on the island. The goals of the Association were to address this problem by designing new teaching materials and training events to aid the existing curricula in schools and offer extracurricular education.[3] While previous attempts at addressing the problems of history teaching had focused on specific projects comprising the revision of history books and linkages with other projects in the region, the Association had a more durable vision of addressing multiple issues around history education that was not project-confined. It aimed at producing education and research materials on method (how one learns and teaches history) and substance (how histories can be told otherwise) to complement rather than replace existing school materials. 'Multiperspectivity' in historical understanding is the ideological cornerstone of AHDR's work.

The Association was for some time housed in a shared office in Ledra Palace Hotel. Closed down during the war and used as UN military barracks since, the Hotel has leant its name to the whole area in that section of the Buffer Zone. From this one-desk space, AHDR expanded its base to a two-storey multi-function facility that stands opposite the Ledra Palace. Members of the Association who were instrumental in this transformation emphasise that the AHDR's presence in the Buffer Zone and in the form of a material structure was vital to their vision of cooperation. They often point to the perceptions about Cyprus as a divided island that they encountered abroad as a central driver in their efforts: 'when asked where we come from, we say Cyprus, and then the next question is almost always "north or south?" We wanted the Association to not have a side'. This call for a new conceptualisation of divided space became a central theme of AHDR's initial projects. One of them, 'Nicosia is calling'[4] produced booklets aimed at elementary school

[3] See http://www.ahdr.info/home.php.
[4] http://cyprus.usembassy.gov/embatwork/usaid_nicosiacallingoct09.html

students aiming to provide an alternative history of Nicosia, presented from multiple perspectives. This and other projects provided AHDR with an anchor on the civil society map and grounded their bid for material presence in the Buffer Zone. It was a bid to change the landscape of civil society and the landscape of urban division at once. This bid took the form of grant applications to international donors and received support from the European Economic Area grants (with contributions from Norway, Iceland, and Lichtenstein) and Norway grants in 2009[5] to support the buying and renovation of the derelict building that eventually became the Home for Cooperation.

The building targeted for this purpose was in fact the only one amongst five derelict houses in the Ledra Palace crossing area that was being used. It used to house a small T-shirt printing shop used by UN personnel. The owners of the building were the heirs of Haigaz Mangoian, an Armenian photographer, who had lived and worked there from the 1950s until 1974, with his brother Levon. In 2005, a cross-border artistic exhibition entitled 'Leaps of Faith' (Figure 2, figure 3)[6] had been given permission to use part of the building as an exhibition space. This was the first time the building was being transformed since the war.[7] At the height of a property boom on both sides, and with the precedent of another building in the area getting approval for renovation into a high-end restaurant, the building was sold to AHDR. Ground was broken in that festive atmosphere in 2010 and by 2011 the renovation had been completed.

At the beginning of the reconstruction, personnel from AHDR looked over the contents of the building and selected items that were considered of interest and could be in the future exhibited in the building. Such items included print frames from the T-shirt shop and small tools. More permanent fixtures, such as disused and rusted sinks, which were removed in the construction works, were memorialised in the video clip produced during the 'History on the Grill' event.[8] This was one way in which the building's history was salvaged and heritigised. Its heritage value arose primarily from the fact that it was a war-affected building, in a position that made it an iconic symbol of the Green Line, and well-maintained as an example of urban British colonial architecture. The second way in which heretigisation proceeded was through the professional involvement of architects who surveyed the features of the building and restored those that could be restored: mid-century marble floors and tiles were cleaned and polished, the central staircase and banisters treated and painted. Bullet holes from the war were left visible where this did not interfere with renovation works (e.g. they remained as grooves on the sandstone but not on the brick and concrete walls which were re-plastered and repainted). The bricks and mortar aspect of this peace project required expert evaluation, planning, and execution, as well as a sizeable amount of funding, most of which came from a second

[5] http://www.home4cooperation.info/index.php/about-h4c/history-of-the-h4c
[6] See Pellapaisiotis (2014) for a critical analysis of the exhibition and comparisons with other political art projects in Cyprus.
[7] Authorisation to intervene in the Buffer Zone is granted by the UN Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), which consults authorities as relevant. In the specific area in the Buffer Zone, jurisdiction lies with the authorities of the Republic when it comes to permits for building, water, electricity, etc, but only for designated sections in the area. Generally, the east side of the road is considered to fall under the Republic's jurisdiction, the west side UNFICYP's.
[8] Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEQu8WKlZjM (last accessed 2 June 2017).

Norwegian European Economic Area grant, both totalling 1.566m Euro. Upon completion of the renovation works, the building of the H4C was opened by the leaders of the two communities, who cut the ribbon together.

The H4C now boasts two conference rooms, a cafeteria, and several offices where personnel from different bicommunal projects work – the projects range from environment, to sports, reconstruction, youth, and social issues. AHDR also runs its own projects, focused on formal and informal history teaching – in the last few years they have included the development of walking tours in Nicosia, history education conferences, oral history research manuals, village-based history research, history-writing from gendered perspectives, and story-telling children's groups. For anyone involved in cross-border activism in Cyprus, the H4C has now become a key reference point. Formal events in the conference room are frequent and the cafeteria enjoys a small but steady stream of clientele, the vast majority of whom are involved in reconciliation activities.

It could be argued then, that the renovation of the H4C has helped consolidate a diverse group of people and activities associated with what was known as the 'bicommunal movement' in previous decades. This movement included leftists, liberals, peace activists, academics, international conflict resolution experts, fringe and mainstream party members, and trade unionists, all of whom had different but largely converging goals centering on the re-unification of the island. On the Turkish-Cypriot side, many of these individuals are also vocal in formal politics and include major unions, politicians, and holders of office. The ideology of co-existence is as much a connector as the space itself. The reconstruction of the H4C as a building is then the stone-and-mortar aspect of that process through which organic intellectuals emerge as the spokespeople of their social group with 'active participation in practical life as constructor[s], organiser[s], "permanent persuader[s]"' (1971: 10). And indeed, this role is not devoid of struggle. Through the process of reconstructing the building, AHDR members have faced bureaucratic hurdles, denial of construction and other licenses, delays in approvals, financial uncertainty, and in some cases personal critique from the establishment that came with professional cost.

AHDR's biggest success in this sense has been the material restoration of the building. At the same time, its ideological impact also needs to be recognised. AHDR is concerned to effect a change in history teaching and nationalist hegemonic discourse. And in as far as authorities appear to applaud the effort (e.g. through the leaders cutting the ribbon, and attending other events there in recent years) or simply tolerate it (through the easing of bureaucratic obstacles), it could be said that AHDR contributed, in however a small part, to the process (as yet incomplete) of hegemonising a once fringe discourse of reconciliation. AHDR contributed to the consolidation of an intellectual movement, even if their establishment as organic intellectuals is yet to be fully achieved. The 'long, hard process' (Crehan, 2002: 160) of establishing reconciliation as hegemonic discourse and its proponents as organic intellectuals, has at least begun through the endorsement by authorities, in the form of leaders' visits to H4C, and the fact that liberal discourse has made reconciliation a legitimate political cause. This has also provided a point of critique

of AHDR for having watered down with liberalism the radicality of bicommunal activism.

Nevertheless, of concern here is the fact that AHDR activists gave a material basis through the H4C to a concept of coexistence (being in Cyprus without being in one of two parts, north/south). The renovation of H4C as a process of giving matter to an idea undoubtedly played a part in widening the hegemonic scope of that idea. In doing so, it showed the centrality of material transformation to the process of hegemonisation. This material engagement with buildings and their transformation is, for us, a key aspect of the organicism we explore. It is what connects ideas (in this case reconciliation) to praxis (in this case transformation of space and public discourse). Organic intellectual praxis therefore, is as much about relating concepts to the public as it is about merging intellectual and physical labour. And this organicism, we show in the next example, unfolds on a spectrum of differing forms of intellectual and physical labour, and differing balances between them.

The H4C's hegemonising role is incomplete, but also partly ambivalent. Prior to the transformation of the building, the bicommunal movement, had largely congregated around Ledra Palace Hotel (Demetriou, 2012). Going past the checkpoints and into a highly-guarded building surrounded by UNFICYP soldiers was a daunting affair for new initiates. The H4C represented a subtle but important change from that situation. People now meet informally at the café, away from conspicuous UN presence (even though checkpoint guards are still confronted). This shift across the road consolidated the movement into the friends and acquaintances one greets every time they visit or pass by while crossing the border. It also expanded it, if slightly, to individuals who use the space for hire for diverse activities: yoga and photography lessons, children's activities, language courses in Greek and Turkish. But this shift also lent credence to the assessment that bicommunalism was now 'professionalising'. Consortia of academics, activists, and professionals were now being created and were bidding for local and international funding for activities across many fields – from environment to media to sports- and many hosted under H4C. Indeed, this was the main qualitative change from what had gone on before, where projects were often either research-based or focused on getting people to express their visions of a united Cyprus (often at the prompt of international conflict resolution academics). Now people were doing things (cleaning beaches, attending summer schools, playing basketball) irrespective of those visions.

What the H4C sheltered as a safe haven in times of difficulty could be budding into a new civil society connecting state, in the form of a future state that the negotiations just might eventually bring about, to the masses of people who will be tasked with carrying out the transition in their daily lives. At the same time this carries risks in the form of backlashes with which AHDR's work is received. This could range from police decisions to allow access (where regulations on vehicle access are highly arbitrary) to ministerial decisions to issue relevant permissions for projects (especially where teachers are involved, for example). As an organic intellectual group, the AHDR anticipates less the

big Marxist revolution than a liberal peace transition.[9] And in this, it may well fall short of radical expectations for wholesale social change within or outside the peace negotiations frame. But it is exactly this ambivalence that provides scope for hegemonisation. It is this ambivalence that allows it to reflect the multiple negotiations of peace as a liberal concept. And AHDR activists are cognizant of that ambivalence inherent in their connections to authorities, just as Gramsci's organic intellectuals are aware of their role as links to civil society (in contradistinction to traditional intellectual who present themselves as unconnected to the state). Such ambivalence is lacking from our next example of OBZ, whose organicism is more focussed on their labour investment.

The Occupy Buffer Zone movement

In October 2011 tents were pitched in the middle of the street crossing between the two Ledra Street checkpoints. They were put up in solidarity with the Wall Street Occupy movement that was inspiring squat-type protest globally. The movement in Cyprus was called Occupy Buffer Zone – OBZ. The dynamics that gave rise to this movement in Nicosia have been explored by Erdal Ilican (2013; 2017). What is crucial to note here is that the movement grew out of a radical youth group that included Greek-Cypriots, migrants, and Turkish-Cypriots, some of whom had had previous squat experiences and who had considered squatting in the Buffer Zone. So the pitching of tents in the Ledra Street crossing area represented a local action of global solidarity and the culmination of radical political thinking and strategising. Another crucial point of note is that the OBZ movement emphatically refused to label itself in specific ways and particularly to subscribe to the label of a 'bicommunal movement' (ibid). Even though it did speak of multiple communities, its radicalism was far more pronounced than that of AHDR and its vision was clearly revolutionary, based roughly on a repertoire of anarchist principles.

The culmination, and arguably the dissolution of the movement had a definite turning point in the occupation of a building in the Buffer Zone area adjacent to the Greek-Cypriot police checkpoint. The building had been abandoned in 1963 but remained under the ownership of the Cypriot Archbishopric. Although empty, after the opening of the Ledra Street checkpoint in 2008, it had hosted an art exhibition entitled 'Uncovered' earlier in 2011, which explored the ruination and abandonment of another Buffer Zone location, the Nicosia airport.[10] It is interesting to note that artistic installations pre-existed both attempts at rehabilitation, just as artistic initiatives had prefigured the onset of gentrification in central Nicosia.

OBZ activists moved into the building in January 2012 and squatted in rooms until April 2012, when they were brutally evicted in a violent attack by the special operations squad unit of the Greek-Cypriot police (Erdal Ilican, 2013). The example of the OBZ rehabilitation of this building could be taken as the revolutionary aspect of Gramscian

[9] A critical evaluation of the shortcomings of such liberal peace is provided by Richmond (2012).
[10] http://basaksenova.com/uncovered/

organicism both in success and in failure. The material aspect of this organicism is what we consider crucial to such an analysis. At the risk of pushing the definition past its limits, our framing of occupiers as 'organic intellectuals' points to this other aspect of organicism in relation to urban space. These organic intellectuals included students, artists, and recent graduates, who joined the occupiers of the Buffer Zone and became builders and planners as they transform their living quarters; their existence in the space itself exemplified the crisis of unemployment that Gramsci described as an outcome of the expanded education sector that comes with industrialisation, but which deceptively promises improved life conditions (1971: 11).

The building occupied consisted of five levels made up of the basement, ground floor, first floor, second floor and the roof. It was a modern concrete structure built in the 1950s for commercial use at the heart of old Nicosia. After 1974, the building had been used as a defence location by the Greek-Cypriot military (the National Guard) who withdrew after the opening of the border. When OBZ activists moved in in 2012 their purpose was to make the building inhabitable so that they could shelter there from the winter cold – both for sleeping purposes and social activities. The process can thus be described as one of rehabilitation rather than structure-altering reconstruction. Their material encounters in this space could be also seen as an attempt to open up a 'dead' space and bringing life back to it. The story that follows is a story of encounters with the palimpsest of physical objects lying in the path of the occupiers. It was a far less structured and professionalised process than the collection of objects and renovation of features that had taken place at H4C.

The north and the west façades of the building consisted of shops running along Kykkou Avenue and Ledra Street respectively. The main entrance to the building was on the side of Ledra Street, near the police checkpoint. The entrance led to a narrow flight of stairs to sections of the upper floors. The façade of the building was given a facelift as part of Nicosia Master Plan Program after the opening of the checkpoint, mainly in order to raise its tourist attraction value. Unlike the west façade, the north façade was left untouched and remained inaccessible to everyone but the UN soldiers. At the east end of this façade a second entrance led to another flight of stairs going all the way from the basement to the roof. The rooms in the ground floor, which functioned as shops once, vary widely in size and many had direct access to an allocated basement (but the ladders leading there were long destroyed).

The first and the second floors consisted of business spaces of comparable sizes, arranged on two sides of an L-shaped corridor. These rooms looked like commercial office spaces, rather than shops. They were self-contained units, each with its own access to the corridor, some also having connecting doors to adjacent rooms. For the occupiers who ended up using these rooms to sleep in, this offered the possibility of having a self-contained room, two connected rooms, or a triple-room space. When the occupiers moved into the building one of the first things they realised was that the building did not consist of only the two sides seen form the road. It had two further wings, attached to neighbouring buildings in the south and east. It was an open square with four sides arranged around a central courtyard. The east side was organised into smaller rooms,

which were probably allocated to the buildings' maintenance personnel who cleaned the shops and stairs and delivered coffee to shop-owners. These rooms lined a corridor that continued to the south side of the building, leading to toilet spaces (two on each floor, each with a small window).

Inevitably, and perhaps unintentionally, one of the first things the occupiers did was to analyse the organisation of the building and reconstruct what may have been its various past uses. In the absence of an easily available official history, the objects found by the occupiers became vehicles in this mental reconstruction. In terms of organicism, this is important to note both analytically and methodologically. The brick-and-mortar work was no longer separate from the intellectual work required in the process of rehabilitation – the two merged. Manual, political, conceptual and emotional work was all done at once by the same people. This is a sort of organic connection that Gramsci's concentration on the division of labour that spurs organic links between social groups and intellectuals overlooks. However, we would like to suggest that in the current formations of counter-hegemonic collectivities such organic connections to space and the materialities that constitute it are important and should be re-examined anew. The in-depth description that follows, in this sense, serves as reminder that for all the varied perspectives we increasingly have of urban reconstruction, we still often take it for granted that the contracting out of manual labour is a step that we can pass over as we search for organic links between dwellers and planners. The occupiers of the building on Kykkou Avenue were planners, dwellers, builders, cleaners, and thinkers. Organicism here connected not only concept and praxis, or social groups. It most importantly connected matter and people in a common process of transformation that in turn required an intimate connection between intellectual and physical labour. We offer these insights as invitation to think comparatively of other squatting practices, even though the specific case has rooted its organicism in the cultural investment of both societies in the conflict and its legacy – an aspect that we explore next.

When Nicosia was divided into Greek and Turkish militarised sectors in the 1960s, Kykkou Avenue became the Greek-Cypriot front line. When OBZ moved in, the shops on the ground floor of this street seemed as if they had been suddenly shut one day and had remained thus for the next fifty years. They were overgrown with plants and full of bullet holes. The shops facing Ledra Street presented a different situation. They seemed ransacked, covered in dust and possessed minimal signs testifying to the former use of the space. Due to the facelift of the façade which had taken place after the opening of the checkpoint in 2008, however, they were in better shape, physically and structurally, than the south side.

As OBZ members moved into the building, the first shop to be occupied was the corner shop on Ledra Street and Kykkou Avenue. It had no printed material lying as debris on the floor, as was the case with other rooms. It was full of heavy furniture like shelves and tables. It looked as if it was a craft man's shop of some sort, working mainly with metal. The furniture found was dusted off and arranged so as to allow the space to function as a communal hall, offering warm beverages and providing safety from the elements of nature. Soon after the occupation of the 'coffee' space an adjacent large space on the

ground floor on the side of Ledra Street was also occupied. The history of this space was easier to reconstruct. The room was labelled with a large business sign that covered the length of the space. It read 'Artin Bohdjalian and son', in Greek and English (Figure 4). It was found lying in a corner, full of machinegun bullet holes. The label pointed to the fact that this was a shop belonging to an Armenian textile merchant. The common Armenian origins of the former occupants of both this shop and the H4C building are telling of a kind of past cosmopolitanism (Scott, 2012) that in its heyday before the war positioned Armenians in the social and physical 'middle ground' between the two warring ethnic groups. At the back of the shop a door was sealed off with bricks and at another corner a hole gaped where once perhaps an iron ladder might have led to the basement. The shop was cleaned and converted into a community centre, and events and activities began being organised there.

While the rehabilitation of the textile shop was taking place, the occupiers continued to explore the rest of the building. They entered and explored the various basement links and proceeded also on the upper floors. To allow further access to the courtyard the makeshift brick wall was taken down. As one of the most invasive structural changes undertaken by the occupiers, it actually restored the original passage from the shop to the yard, which the brick barrier had blocked. A wooden door was fixed in place of the barrier. The significance of this change was that the upper floors of the building had now become easily accessible. In order to avoid unwelcome attention by authorities to this fact, which may have prompted eviction attempts, a large banner was placed in front of the door to conceal it.

In the internal yard a large tree was growing amongst accumulated debris that included a water tank. Across the yard the rest of the building was accessible through a specious staircase. Debris was strewn across all the floors of the building and sandbags were piled in numerous places, especially windows, banisters, and other openings. These and the rows of barbed wire abundant throughout the building were clearly left overs from the military defence uses it was put to. Graffiti with military references was etched into walls, presumably made by recruits who had served in the building in previous years, and this sat alongside official military markings. Bullet holes strewn across every single wall made people wonder what deaths might have taken place there. Ploughing through the debris was a visceral experience, bringing the war, frozen in time as it was, into people's bodies, in their lungs, and on their skin. The occupiers decided that some of these bullet holes should be the subject of memorialisation, and dedicated a wall to circling all the bullet holes on it. The aesthetics of memorialisation were more immediate than those at H4C. Plaster here was not a medium of concealing (as opposed to sandstone, where bullet holes were left unfilled) but a medium of emphasis – a canvas on which to draw the deictic lines that accentuated by pointing to them, the holes left by violence. The plaster canvas was used to signpost that 'violence was here, and here, and here'.

Half of the rooms facing Ledra Street, the ones above the police station up to and including the entrance, seemed to have been cleaned at a previous time – another mark of military use. The other half of the rooms contained mountains of trash, that could well have belonged once to the cleaned out rooms as well: cloth, newspapers, business

files, wood, doors, windows, glass, dust. Sandbags lined all of the north-facing windows, rendering them battlements. Standing in front of them one had a straight line of vision into the Turkish quarter of the old town. The second floor exhibited the same features: military arrangements and haphazardly thrown debris to allow the building a military function. For many occupiers it was an emotional experience, bringing into view the transformation of commercial life into an arrangement geared towards the calculation of death. Embodiment in this sense also took the form of putting people inside someone else's shoes. As occupiers looked out from the window battlements, as they deciphered the names and dates etched in Greek on the walls, and as they pondered on the Greek symbols that attended them (crosses, Greek flags), they re-enacted, in a performative way, those military identities. Rehabilitation was also a bodily and subjective experience in a much more visceral sense than the professional reconstruction of H4C.

Exploration then proceeded to the basement, which was dirty, humid and full of garbage. The walls were labyrinthine and heavy machinery sat amongst the trash. This was the space that seemed most dangerous and thus designated as the rehabilitation's dumping site. It contrasted sharply with the situation on the roof, from which one enjoyed panoramic views of old Nicosia extending from east to west. At the northwest corner of the roof, an iron flagpole hoisted the flag of Greece, supported at its base by car tyres and randomly collected marble slabs.

After initial explorations, the occupiers cleared a path through the stairs and corridors by removing sand bags and razor wires. This exposed interesting architectural details like glass bricks strategically positioned on the floors to allow light into the building. Some of these bricks were broken, posing health risks and allowing rainwater to sip into the building and create structural damage. This called for immediate attention and the broken glass bricks were covered with wood to prevent injury and leaks. On the roof these corresponding areas and broken glass were strengthened with waterproof material. The process of labouring on the roof, gave cause to consider what to do about the flagpole. People debated as to whether the flag should be taken down, moved, or left alone. Opinions converged on the last, the main argument being about attracting unnecessary attention and inviting intervention by the authorities. However, as people started using the roof as a relaxing place (sunbathing, smoking, chatting), the slabs that held the base of the post were moved around. After a rainy and stormy night the flagpole fell. Debates ensued as to whether it should be left or restored. After another two days of indecision, the flag disappeared and the pole was left on the floor. These were the kind of mundane decisions that unlike the presence of bullet holes, AHDR did not need to consider.

As occupiers moved the piles of debris from the rooms they decided to live in, a sifting process began. Mexican and Japanese cloth from the 1940s and 1950s, labelled with country of origin and shipping dates was found in Bohdjalian's shop and storerooms. Other cloth, in different sizes, was unlabelled and unmarked. Perhaps other merchants also had inhabited the building. Newspapers, mainly the Greek ultra-nationalist Mahi, littered the floors, suggesting, perhaps, the political affiliations of shop owners prior to the war and of the army recruits who guarded the building in post-war times. Occupiers

took time to scan some of the news titles, mainly from the 1960s and 1970s, for nationalist rhetoric and reports of conflict incidents. Some of the cloth and print matter (newspapers but also books and notebooks) was collected, dusted, and used alongside wood pieces, also 'reclaimed' for use in art pieces created by OBZ members in the ground floor activity centre.

'Reclaiming' here is a term that deserves consideration: the claims to these articles, abandoned by force as civilian owners left in a hurry, and discarded by the military personnel who inhabited the building after them, were not claims negotiated between people any more, but rather negotiated with time. Items that might have been interesting were decayed beyond rescue and had to be thrown. Others required extensive work to salvage. What was important to keep, clean, show to friends, and exhibit in artwork, and what should be consigned to the basement, being further destroyed in the process? Who was to keep and use or own the found articles? In the case of H4C the collection and storing of print frames had been undertaken in the name of AHDR. Occupiers did not envision a long-term future where their collected items would be displayed under one name. And they vehemently refused, as we have seen, one collective name.

Negotiations were made between a finders-keepers rule and collective need basis. Deliberations about worth, historical value, and personal appreciation of objects were often part of this negotiation too. Wood pieces were turned into makeshift doors and windows or burnt at night for warmth and cooking. Much of the debris was simply moved out of the rooms and thrown in the yard or the basement. This was a tremendous task for the occupiers who worked for days on end, some with dust masks, others not. Indicatively, consider that each room of the seven-eight or so which were cleared contained 40-50 sandbags of 15-20 kg each. In rooms without sandbags (i.e. where soldiers had presumably moved the debris from the sandbagged rooms that they were placed in), the refuge rose to a fifth of the room height.

While a team relayed all this down the stairs, other occupiers forayed into other shops. One of them was clearly a pharmacy. Bottles were strewn on the floor, many containing pills. Another decision needed to be made here about disposal for health reasons, as morphine and adrenaline were among the labels found. All the drugs found there were buried in the ground of the courtyard. A glass baby milk bottle from Czechoslovakia of the 1950s was collected and carefully cleaned (insert photo). Following the clearing out operation, occupiers swept away remaining dust from the floors and stairs, rendering the first floor fully accessible.

The next phase of rehabilitation involved painting. Names of soldiers, crosses, flags and military signs were all painted over, often with graffiti artwork. The exception was the memorialisation of bullet holes, as we saw circled in black and left unpainted. As the walls gained colour and vibrancy, these black dots were reminders of the dark history that had sealed the fate of the building.

By this time the building was functioning in a personal and communal sense. Initially, rooms were allocated to first-comers, who had laboured in the process of rehabilitation.

When these were assigned, additional rooms were allocated communal uses – a kitchen, a common room, a future radio station. Most of the items introduced for this conversion had come from the building itself – wood was used now for making tables and beds. Iron pieces were bent into hangers and doorknobs. Cloth pieces were cut and sown into curtains, bed covers, and tablecloths. Newspapers and books that could be saved found their place in a communal library. Other refuge was shaped into the OBZ's mascot, a green human-like figure called 'the alien'. Some of the sandbags were used in the activity centre to prop up table-tops and some of the razor wire made a corner piece art display. As the building became inhabitable, a generator was carried in to provide needed electricity at specified times and a water pipe was tapped into to provide water needed for personal hygiene and to further clean the building.

Over a matter of weeks, OBZ activists had turned an abandoned and gutted (but structurally sound) building into a habitable space. In terms of landscape-making, their achievement could be considered a form of 'organic rehabilitation'. They had acted on the basis of the group's collective needs, proceeded on the cues of the situations encountered at each step of the way, and put their mental capacities and manual labour to the service of the task ahead of them. The workings of organic intellectualism in the Gramscian sense are no different to this radical, marginal, and decisively un-organised effort. Through the occupation of the Kykkou-Ledras building, the OBZ movement had staged an incisive critique of the gentrification that was taking hold of the old town a few meters away on both sides of the Green Line. There, since the opening of this checkpoint in 2008, shopping had picked up, restaurant and café businesses were springing up, and rent prices that had been suppressed for years due to the proximity of the ceasefire line, were rising. As a result, old and uncared-for buildings rented by migrant communities were changing hands, the old tenants replaced by wealthier Nicosians who refurbished them, or itinerant tourists and professionals who rented them on short leases from managing companies. In this process, the space of the pedestrianised street was in high demand, and its use was assigned to the various establishments by municipal authorities. The crowd which eventually found shelter in the Buffer Zone, was being pushed out of these streets, having previously been a staple presence on them. The public benches they had appropriated in the past were now pulled out and replaced by chairs and tables owned by the new establishments, and on which 'street people' had no longer any claims.

In this politically secluded location, occupiers mounted a performance against the liberal practices that exploited visions of reunification (symbolised by the opening of the checkpoints) without delivering reconciliation on the ground. One of the ideological points of conversion among the occupiers was anti-militarism. Returning to Harvey's words with which we began, OBZ was a festival of the people, which indicated the forces of gentrification. Pushed out of 'their' streets, occupiers were now appropriating the space of the border. OBZ was a movement that found space only in the fringes of the city, having been pushed out from more central downtown locations as these were taken up by cafes and restaurants. And from those fringes it forged an alternative picture

of the city – conceptually, but also in the literal sense of becoming a focus of attention for passing tourists and other visitors.

If we see both examples as forms of battles for re-inserting conflict memories in the landscape, when these memories are being obliterated by gentrification forces, then an obvious distinction needs to be recognised between the H4C and OBZ, and that is the scale of violence. While the processes of securing planning and building permits as well as funding for the H4C pitted AHDR members often against their authorities, at no point did those relationships entail open violence. The OBZ's relation with authorities, on the other hand, had been fraught with tension right from the beginning (Figure 5). And it bore the brunt of the wrath of those authorities when they decided to dissolve it. On 6 April 2011, Greek-Cypriot special anti-riot police units stormed the OBZ-occupied building and evicted its occupiers in a markedly brutal fashion, holding guns to their heads, kicking, punching, and beating them (Erdal Ilican, 2013; Amnesty International, 2012). This attack spelled the end of the occupation. Afterwards the building was sealed off, padlocked and chained with new locks, while new metal sheets and high security doors were installed by the UN on the street to block off access to the side streets where occupiers had originally pitched their tents. The OBZ collective continued to morph into several counter-culture groups and some of its members continue to claim downtown space through street events and activities. Their intervention on public representations is evidently visual in the graffiti that appears in the old town, but it is also spatial, in the memories that still associate the now chain-locked building to Occupy; and it is social and intellectual in the activities of collective organising that continue through talks, events, communal kitchens, and publishing of magazines. In their different ways therefore, and in evidently a restricted sense, both movements can claim successes in reconstructing the material and intellectual heritage of Nicosia's ceasefire landscape.

Conclusion

We would like to propose that the differences between the two processes of reconstruction that we have examined are rooted in the liberal hegemonies that frame the politics of the Cyprus conflict.[11] In accepting a liberal discourse in their critical narrative of the conflict, the AHDR was able to manoeuvre its positions into hegemonic rhetoric. OBZ was uncompromising in squarely rejecting basic liberal tenets in their interaction with authorities and the public, such as appointing representatives and following established process. The organic character of the reconstruction and rehabilitation initiatives thus examined points back to the decisive character of the state in thwarting and allowing different kinds of practices. The stakes of this, given the differential histories of these examples are thus shown as outcomes of the gaps created at the interstices of conflict and gentrification. Festivals of the people, like the feasts we started the article with, may turn into revolutions, but they are often crushed before they get there; but this does not spell the end of the war of position. The war over concepts,

[11] For alternative accounts of these see MacGinty and Richmond (2013).

ideologies, and their material transformations continues through the new groups, the new ideas and the new practices that take shape now in communal kitchens, brochures and journals, protest initiatives.

In either case, the role of organic intellectuals in the transformation of the urban post-conflict landscape and the material processes of memorialisation that render it heritage, is far broader and far more nuanced than studies of Nicosia at least have so far afforded – emphasising chiefly architects, urban planners, professionals. Looking at the building of peace as a bricks-and-mortar process from a Gramscian perspective requires that we consider a wide variety of actors within and beyond traditional 'civil society', to include its various margins. One of the things that the exercise in fact shows is that these margins are often at the centre of conceptual and material hegemonies. In the cases we have examined, they indicate the ties between nationalist rhetoric on the conflict and the encroachment of urban development through gentrification into the Buffer Zone. It remains for a future study, in this sense, to illuminate how capital accumulation in the process of gentrification envelops both conflict discourse and its counter in hegemonic structures that continue to generate new forms of exclusion.

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